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# The Decorator and Furnisher.

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## PRIZE COMPETITION IN INTERIOR DECORATION.

MESSRS. JOSEPH P. McHUGH & CO., Interior Architects and Decorators, New York, with the view of encouraging the study of interior decoration after pure styles, offer six subjects for competition in THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER, beginning with the October, 1890, issue, which also commences the seventeenth volume of our journal. A prize of TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS will be paid by the above firm, every alternate month during the year, for the best original design in the following special styles of ornamental construction and decorative treatment:

### LIST OF SUBJECTS FOR COMPETITION.

October, 1890,	- A COLONIAL RECEPTION ROOM.
	Prize awarded to James Thomson, of Boston.
December, "	- AN ITALIAN RENAISSANCE DINING ROOM.
February, 1891,	- A LOUIS SEIZE DRAWING ROOM.
April, "	- A ROMANESQUE HALL.
June, "	- AN ADAMS LIBRARY.
August, "	- A LOUIS QUINZE BOUDOIR.

### CONDITIONS.

1.—Each competitive design must be 15 inches by 10 in size. The drawing must be executed by the pen in black ink, and sent us flat, not rolled up.

2.—Each drawing must be original, and should include suggestions for wall decoration, draperies and furniture, after the style of its period, but adapted to modern construction and requirements.

3.—Each drawing must be signed with a *nom de plume*, and accompanied by a letter giving the real name and address of the designer. All designs must be addressed to the Editor of THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER, 150 Nassau Street, New York, and must reach the office not later than the 1st of the month previous to that for which the competition is announced; thus, drawings for the December competition should reach the Editor not later than the 1st of November.

4.—A committee of decorative artists will decide as to which design is entitled to the prize in each competition, as well as those entitled to honorable mention, and their decision will be final.

AN examination of the various designs sent us in competition for a prize of twenty-five dollars to be given to the best design for a Colonial Reception Room, resulted in the prize being awarded to the design signed "Lamplight," the work of Mr. James Thomson, of Boston. The following letter from

## THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

that gentleman acknowledging receipt of the prize has been received by us:

BOSTON, MASS., Sept. 12, 1890.

TO THE EDITOR DECORATOR AND FURNISHER,

Dear Sir: I beg to acknowledge receipt of check for \$25 from Messrs. Joseph P. McHugh & Co., No. 3 West 42d street, New York, being amount of prize awarded in the competition in design for Colonial Reception Room.

The desire to encourage the study of pure styles is a laudable one, and I trust that this effort in that direction will meet with the measure of success it deserves, and that the firm of decorators so kindly offering these prizes may find the investment one not barren of good results. Very truly yours,

JAMES THOMSON.

The prize design is published on page 9. As will be noticed, the designer has evidently considered the mantel side of the room the feature most worthy of note. By building the elliptical arches on either side of mantel, he has secured a perfect balance of effect, and this without absolute repetition, gained by treating one opening as a doorway and the other as a recessed window. In the transom of the bay window and in the finish around entrance door, the opportunity for stained glass effects is unusually good. The draperies are designed to run on rods concealed within the casing of the transom.

In the Colonial style we have presented for our use the materials from which we may, by judicious selection and adaptation, produce work which will appeal to the tastes of people of refinement and education. In fact it requires a certain degree of education and art training to appreciate the style. Founded on the classic orders of Greece, modified and adapted to the use of the colonists, we can by judicious selection safely draw from it to design works of satisfying excellence, adapted of course to modern requirements.

During the past few years some of our architects have successfully worked in this style, but we do not think its possibilities are by any means exhausted. Regardless of the dictates of fashion, there will always be that "saving remnant" who will look with kindly eye upon it, and appreciate it through good and evil report.

DESIGNERS everywhere are invited to send in drawings for the forthcoming competition. The next subject will be AN ITALIAN RENAISSANCE DINING ROOM, and designs should reach us by the 1st of November, 1890, so that the prize design can appear in the December issue of the journal. We have decided not to claim possession of unsuccessful drawings, so that they will be returned to competitors if so requested.

THE present issue of THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER begins the Seventeenth Volume. As will be observed we have reduced the size of our paper somewhat, chiefly at the request of many subscribers who objected to the large, and therefore unwieldy size of our paper. Condensation is the inevitable tendency of the age in all things, and therefore we are only too happy to have an excuse to make our journal more portable, more business-like, in its proportions. The reduction in size, however, is more apparent than real. The reader will not perceive any difference in the size of our illustrations or the amount of reading matter on each page compared with former pages.

The Seventeenth Volume of our journal, will, we assure our readers, keep abreast of the times in all that pertains to modern and antique art and everyday furniture and furnishings. It will treat of Porcelain, Glassware, Carpets, Carvings, Mural Decoration, The Remodeling of Interiors, Upholstery and Drapery Fabrics, Stained Glass, Mosaics, Hardware Furnishings, Articles of Vertu and Bric-a-Brac. Correct styles for furnishing interiors will be described and illustrated in each issue. The Home Workshop will continue to give hints on every conceivable subject relating to home-made adornments of the house. The new features that will appear in the coming new volume will be a series of illustrated papers, giving glimpses of aristocratic American homes, not otherwise to be obtained. The publication of a series of illustrated articles on How to Furnish and Decorate Houses at a Low Cost will shortly begin, which are sure to prove popular with our readers. We also propose to publish a colored supplement from time to time illustrating new designs in art furniture and new methods of mural decoration in their actual colors, which will render THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER invaluable, not only to the trades concerned, but to every lover of art in the household.

WE present our readers in another part of the journal, with a few drawings and designs made by the pupils of the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art.

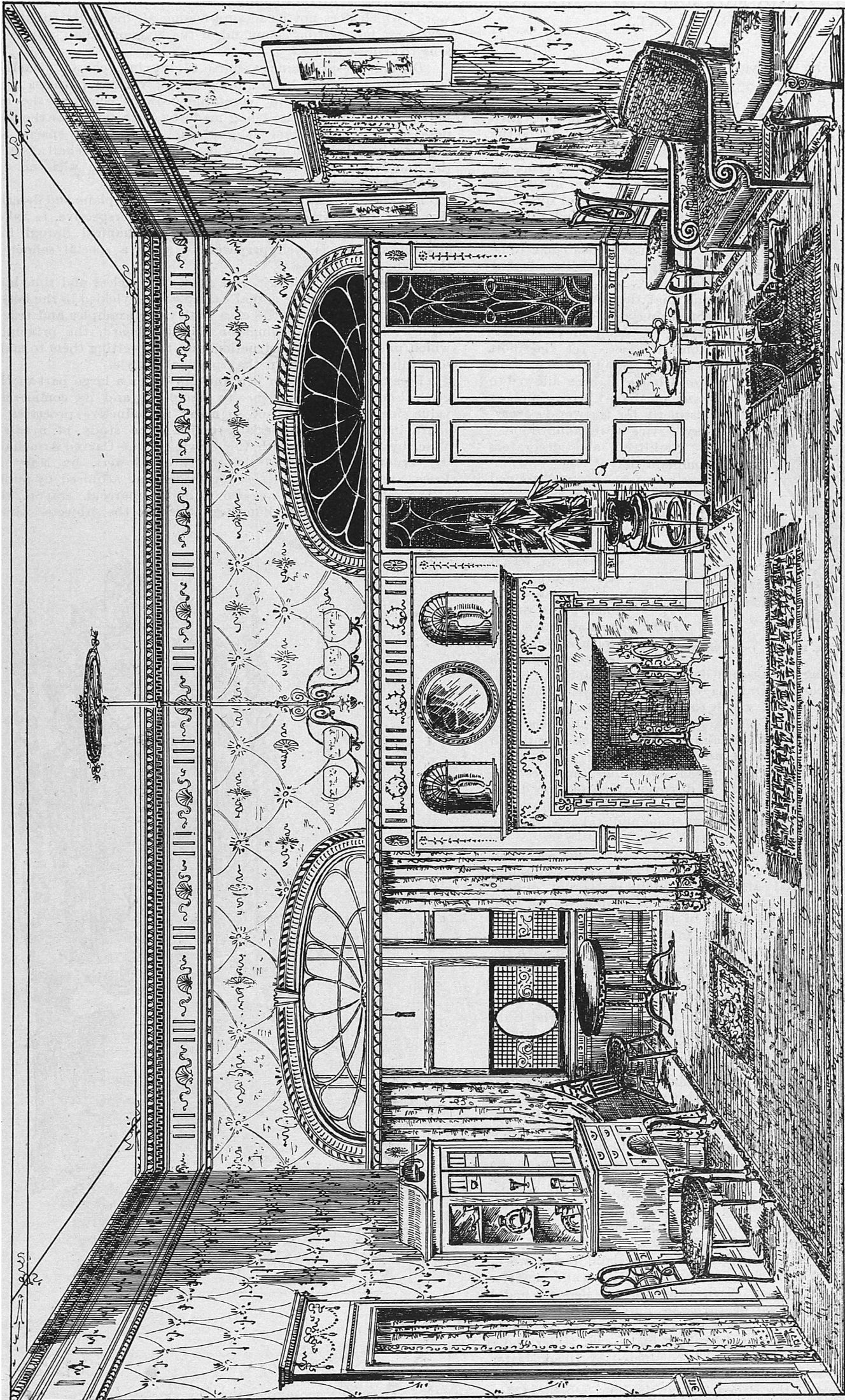
In an age when trade schools are very justly emphasizing the industrial idea in education, and seeking to combine industrial effort with mental training as a necessary quality of good craftsmanship, there ought to be emphasized at the same time the even greater importance of the art idea, as underlying all noble industrial effort. Far too little attention is paid in American schools to such work as this. Hence the great importance of the Philadelphia Art School, which proves the existence of a vital interest in art industry. In proof of the practical nature of the teaching imparted at this institution, at the Annual Convention of the United States Potters' Association, held at Washington in January, 1890, a prize competition for designs suitable for pottery, was held among the students of the art schools in the three cities of Boston, New York and Philadelphia. Among the drawings sent out by the students of the New York school, none were considered worthy of entering the competition, consequently the entire list was rejected. The Boston schools sent eight sets of drawings showing careful drawing and earnest study of the best examples of Greek forms and historic ornament, but hardly suitable in proportion and dimensions for the table and toilet pieces made at present. The Philadelphia school sent twenty six sets of drawings, which, for variety, vigor and excellence of design, color effect, and adaptation to the uses of the United States potter, won the highest praise. "These drawings," said the chairman of the prize committee, "show that the students in the Philadelphia school have not only been trained in the general principles of art, but have also been trained to know that there is such a thing as applied art."

There is a tremendous field for original design in applied art in this country. Designers in wall paper, textile fabrics, stained glass, oil-cloth, pottery, and decoration of all kinds, and wood engraving have been too long mere copyists, simply reproducing foreign ideas, mutilated or altered in one way or another, to pass as original work. Figures are cut from various fabrics, a design being simply an agglomeration of figures, or parts of figures, obtained from cotton, silk or wool fabric, or from carpets or wall paper, which have been fitted together, and made up into designs for all kinds of goods. It is the mission of the Industrial Art School to wipe away this blot from the art industries of the country. People ought to be taught to be more independent of foreign fashions and foreign fabrics than they are at present, when a whisper of the magical words "these are imported goods, I assure you," is every day blasting the reputation of American products, simply because our domestic products lack honesty, culture and refinement, which a liberal provision for native art would develope.

IN the original furniture of Louis XV and XVI, the types of which are now so much in vogue, the articles were regarded as pure decorative pieces, the wood with its graceful curves and tender coloring in inlays being mostly regarded as the vehicle for carrying metal work and other adornments expressive of delicacy of taste and ministering to the sense of the beautiful in accord with the sprightly and vivacious sentiment of the French. The furniture was useful as well as refined, but the feasting of the sight with elegance was the chief consideration. In the modern adaptation of these styles, utility, comfort and suitability to apartments rule, and, as a consequence, reproductions are neither so elaborate or costly. We invite our cabinet makers on pages 6 and 7 to study the beauty of proportion and the diversity of line which are the prominent attractions nowadays. Were the details of surface enrichment effaced and the prodigality of inner lines abated, the furniture of that epoch would yet be admired. A cause influencing adaptations is that in the Louis epochs, the furniture supplied to apartments was but scanty compared to our own. There were no soaring cabinets with niches and towering shelves. This comparative abundance of the pieces of furniture there illustrated necessarily exercises a certain amount of rest as an influence on decorative treatment.

EXPRESSION of thought and feeling gives its own value to artistic work and is essential to fidelity of representation. What is wanted is not that a design should be wholly new but that it should be based on evident principles and adapted to place and use. If it has character this comes from the finger ends of the draughtsman as soon as he begins to draw. The honest development of the work depends on its being done as well as possible, evidencing a delight in doing it.





COLONIAL RECEPTION ROOM

DESIGNED BY "LAMPLIGHT"

PRIZE DESIGN FOR A COLONIAL RECEPTION ROOM. BY JAMES THOMSON, BOSTON.